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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2/22/07

SPONSOR Sharer LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Study Marketing Distance Learning Program SJM 31

ANALYST Baca

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY07	FY08		
	NFI		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to HB 201/HECS & SB 209/SECS

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Joint Memorial requests the Public Education Department study the feasibility and revenue possibilities of marketing New Mexico's distance learning program to other states and report its findings to the legislative education study committee prior to the second session of the forty-eighth legislature; and that a copy of this memorial be transmitted to the Secretary of Public Education.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

SJM 31 contains no appropriation. PED comments that it will cost nearly six thousand dollars to carry out the intent of the memorial. However, LFC staff believes conduct of this type of study is well within the purview of the PED's activities and budget. Therefore, no appropriation should be required.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The memorial lists the advantages of distance learning for New Mexico students and teachers along with the existence of world class national laboratories that specialize in math and science activities as important variables in providing improved learning opportunities for students. The bill's sponsor believes the expertise developed and available in New Mexico should be shared with educators and students in other states – for a fee.

The PED notes that “New Mexico has a wealth of expertise outside the classroom, especially in the areas of math and science, as the state is home to two national laboratories. Students in other states would benefit from the knowledge and skills that New Mexico teachers and scientists have to offer. Any opportunity available to share our expertise would be beneficial to New Mexico as we grow technology and workforce development.” PED also comments that perhaps states with lesser developed distance learning systems would be willing to take advantage of the New Mexico experiences in distance learning for students and teachers.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Under this section, PED submits the following:

It is uncertain what the charges would be for any online courses that would be purchased by states. The increasing competitive development of online courses nationally has resulted in more services being purchased to meet immediate needs. Online courses are being used to support professional development, home-school programs, charter schools, public schools and government agencies.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

The existing partnerships between the National Labs and the state's educational entities would continue to address distance learning in New Mexico.

LRB/mt